

Message of the Lilies



LILIES bear a message at the Eastertide,
Bow your heads and listen what their petals may confide.
Heads a-nodding, all a-throbbing with a pean strong,
Stems a-quiver, quite susceptible to the bursting song;
Just forgetting for a moment everything beside,
Listen to their challenge at the Eastertide.

HAS INSPIRED GREAT ARTISTS

Subject of the Resurrection Always One That Has Called Forth Their Best Efforts.

THE Christian artist, about the fourth century, when he made his first hesitating attempts to treat the subject of Easter, carefully refrained from showing the risen Lord at the moment of resurrection. With a proper reverence for the Scriptures, he refused to show what they did not reveal. He depicted an empty tomb, watched by the Roman guard, or visited by the holy women. A sarcophagus in the Lateran museum simply shows a labarum, or Roman standard, under which the keepers are fast asleep. Even the tomb is only suggested. The Louvre has a bas-relief in silver-gilt which formerly belonged to the Abbey of St. Denis, where we see an angel showing the Savior's empty tomb to the two Marys. A more realistic representation is Thomas touching the Savior's wounds, which may be seen upon an early sarcophagus, preserved in the church of St. Celso at Milan.

This chaste reserve, which was content to depict only what was described by the Gospel narrative, was maintained by Christian art until the thirteenth century, when, under the influence of the Renaissance, men began to paint the actual resurrection itself, with a conscious striving for dramatic effect. There is an early representation which shows the upper half of the Savior's body appearing above the grave, and also a representation of his appearance to Mary Magdalene, by Duccio of Siena (1255-1319), who, with Giotto of Florence, first attempted to find a new artistic formula in the observation of life. It is to Giotto that we owe our first representation of the resurrection. In a small picture, which formed one of a series of panel decorations upon a press for sacred vessels, in the sacristy of St. Croce, Florence, now in the Florence academy, he shows us the risen Christ, lightly standing with the cross and banner of victory in his right hand, upon the heavy slab which covers the still closed tomb. The angel does not appear, but the Roman guards are sleeping beside the tomb. The Savior's feet barely touch the tomb and the whole impression is that of an ethereal body, no longer subject to the physical

laws which attach us to this earth. This now becomes the characteristic feature of all resurrection pictures. Taddeo Gaddi adheres to this in his magnificent fresco, and so does Perugino.

Among the many disciples of Giotto there was but one great artist, the painter-monk, Fra Angelico of Fiesole. There is an indescribable sweetness in his virgins and angels, enhanced by his exquisite drawing and delicate, luminous color, but his very sweetness often falls upon our modern taste. As Reinach says: "We long for a few wolves in this impenetrable sheepfold." Fra Angelico treated the resurrection subject several times. In one of his pictures he still has the pre-renaissance reserve. He shows us the wondering women and the angels at the sepulcher. In another he combines the old version with the new. In the third picture he shows the actual resurrection scene.

Fra Bartolomeo, the teacher of Andrea del Sarto, though not a master of the first rank, treated this subject with great success in his picture, which is now in the Pitti palace, Florence. Raphael also painted it. In his picture the keepers are not sleeping, but they are witnesses of the resurrection. Annibale Carracci goes a step further. He was not satisfied to prove by a witness that Christ really arose from the dead. He sets out to show that he arose in a miraculous manner. He not only paints a closed tomb, which is scripturally correct, for the Gospels describe the great earthquake and the rolling away of the stone as taking place after the act of resurrection, but Carracci places a sleeping guard, lying full length across the top of the altar-like tomb. There can thus be no doubt that the Savior who soars above must have miraculously passed this double barrier.

It is a relief to turn from the contemplation of such ridiculous puerilities to the strength of Martin Schoengauer's engraving. Albrecht Durer's resurrection in his Smaller Passion series of wood cuts is rather empty; his Larger Passion shows us a much more worthy and noble composition. Rembrandt also treated this subject. As usual with him the great problem was the treatment of light. He does not show the Savior, but he selects the moment of the great earthquake and the appearance of the angel as the subject for a most wonderful etching, wherein he again, as Couture says, "with black and white makes color."

Whenever the risen Lord is shown in these resurrection pictures, he appears as the victorious conqueror of death and the grave. This conception has also passed into hymnology, for the Lutheran hymn writer, Paul Gerhardt, sings:

They in a grave did sink him,
The foe held jubilee;
Before he can bethink him,
Lo, Christ again is free.

And "Victory!" he cries,
And waveth toward the skies
His banner, for the field
Is by the hero held.

Perhaps the most natural and, therefore, the most common representation of the resurrection is the picture of the women at the empty sepulcher. Like the kings who came to adore the infant Savior, their number is always three. We find them in the very earliest resurrection pictures and carvings, as well as in the richly illuminated Gospels of the tenth and eleventh centuries: Duccio's treatment of this subject is fine, especially the expression of awe in the women, and the action of the angel, who points to the empty tomb.—Christian Herald.

Easter lilies softly swinging,
In the breezes gently singing,
Echoes sweet their bells are ringing,
At Eastertide.

RISE TO NEW LIFE OLD EASTER RITES

Assurance of Immortality to All Those Who Have Died With Christ.

THE resurrection of Jesus signals victory—victory for himself, victory over death, over his enemies, over all timid and doubting souls—and establishes the efficiency of the atonement, the seal of God's approval, the integrity of his teaching and the assurance of immortality. In this life he brought "life and immortality to light." Upon this historic fact of the resurrection of Jesus is based the whole of our Christianity. If no resurrection, there is no immortality; there is no forgiveness; there is no reality to testimony, and no hope of immortality—and no word of truth regarding it. Easter day is a victory over doubt, darkness and death.

We older children grope our way
From dark behind to dark before,
And only when our hands we lay
Dear Lord, in thine, the night is day,
And there is darkness nevermore.

In his victory—in his triumphant life—the life of one who was dead, but lives forevermore, we feel that he does reach "downward to our sunless days," when faith is small and hope lingers, and takes our hands of prayer and makes us feel his light.

Thou madest death; and lo, thy foot
Is on the skull which thou hast made;
Thou art just.

Somehow we feel that here we have the crowning demonstration of his divine Sonship and Messiahship. "That he was a teacher come from God," for "never man spake like this man," and his victory was signaled by his enemies, "Behold, the whole world has gone after him." He was never so universally and essentially popular as he is this hour.

You never really lived till he came into your life. De Quincy scented the true vision: "I will walk abroad; old griefs shall be forgotten; I shall wash the fever from my brow. I shall be unhappy no longer."

So do we, dying to sin, rise to newness of life.

Dying with Christ, dying to all unholy desires, unworthy motives, impure thinking, base ideals, vulgar habits, to all hatred and malice, jealousy and envy, bitterness and evil speaking, pride and conceit; dying with him to these, we rise to newness of life. Everything changes.

Something went out to our temple-house, that inner sacred sanctuary, and something else has been put in. New loves, new passions, new ideals, new purposes, a new and glorious personality, the glorious crown of all creation, reigns in triumph. The things you once loved you do now hate, and the very things you once hated you do now love. Everything has actually changed, and the psychology of it is perfect and the victory logical and natural. Life is now worth while.

There are new men and women; souls that live as if he sat in the seat beside them, walked through the office and out into the street, a real companion.

He leaves his command: Walk as children of light. "Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine obscurity be as the noonday, and I will guide thee continually, and make thee to ride upon the high places of the earth." Victory is ours in this victorious king.

The Savior's Teachings.

It is said of Jesus that he "brought life and immortality to light." That he brought life to light we know. Life is more abundant, vastly richer for his influence than it ever was before. It is also true that he brought immortality to light in a way the world had never known it before.

Macedonians Preserve the Traditions of the Season in All Their Beauty.

IN NO corner of this whimsical old world of ours can there be found more traditions of Eastertide than those treasured in the heart of the Macedonian race, on the border between Europe and Asia.

Even before the forty days' fast is quite over the rejoicing that is to flower full blown at Easter begins, crocuswise, to push its bright way upward through the gloom of abstinence and vigil, says a writer in the Housekeeper. On Palm Sunday, in little bands of three and four, the "Palm Maidens," each flourishing a festive gold-embroidered handkerchief, go from house to house singing their happy carols.

Holy Thursday, radiant with red sashes from every balcony—fluttering symbols of the brightness of the spring—is the great egg-dyeing day. With the first egg dyed the fond mother forms the sign of the cross upon the face and neck of her dear, wee nestling, saying: "Mayest thou grow as red as this egg and strong as a stone." Then gently she places it beside the icon of the Virgin where it remains during the coming year—perhaps for a tender reminder to the holy image of the wish that the earthly mother has just uttered that the divine mother may grant its fulfillment.

At twelve o'clock Easter even a midnight mass is celebrated. The gospel is read in the churchyard "beneath the silent stars." There follows the joyous hymn "Christ is Risen"—the glad outburst of firearms, the clattering tongues of bells. The priest, holding up a lighted candle, bids all "Come and receive light," and in happy confusion the throng lights its candles.

With these little flickering torches in their eager hands, they turn to the church. The doors are closed and locked. Loudly they knock, their voices raised in solemn chant:

"Lift the gates, O ye rulers of ours, and ye eternal gates be lifted, for there will enter Christ, the King of Glory!" A voice within demands: "Who is this King of Glory?"

And the answer breaks forth exultantly: "He is the Lord, strong and powerful. He is the Lord mighty in war!"

As you catch the spirit of it all and make it your own, do you wonder that the church doors open and that men and women crowd in to worship the risen King?

Home from the service, many slip red eggs under their sleeping children's pillows that when the little ones awake Easter morning they may discover that Paschalia, the female personification of Easter, has surprised the household with a fairy visit.

A lamb roasted whole is the distinctive dish of the Christian Passover dinner, a very love feast when all past grievances are forgiven and happiness flows with wine.

Joy Cometh With Easter.

Even stern old Martin Luther couldn't refrain from a hymn of joy on Easter morning; and today joy surges in the hearts of all of us as the gay Eastertide with its lilies and colored eggs and bunny rabbits and new clothes is here.

Natural Home of the Lily.

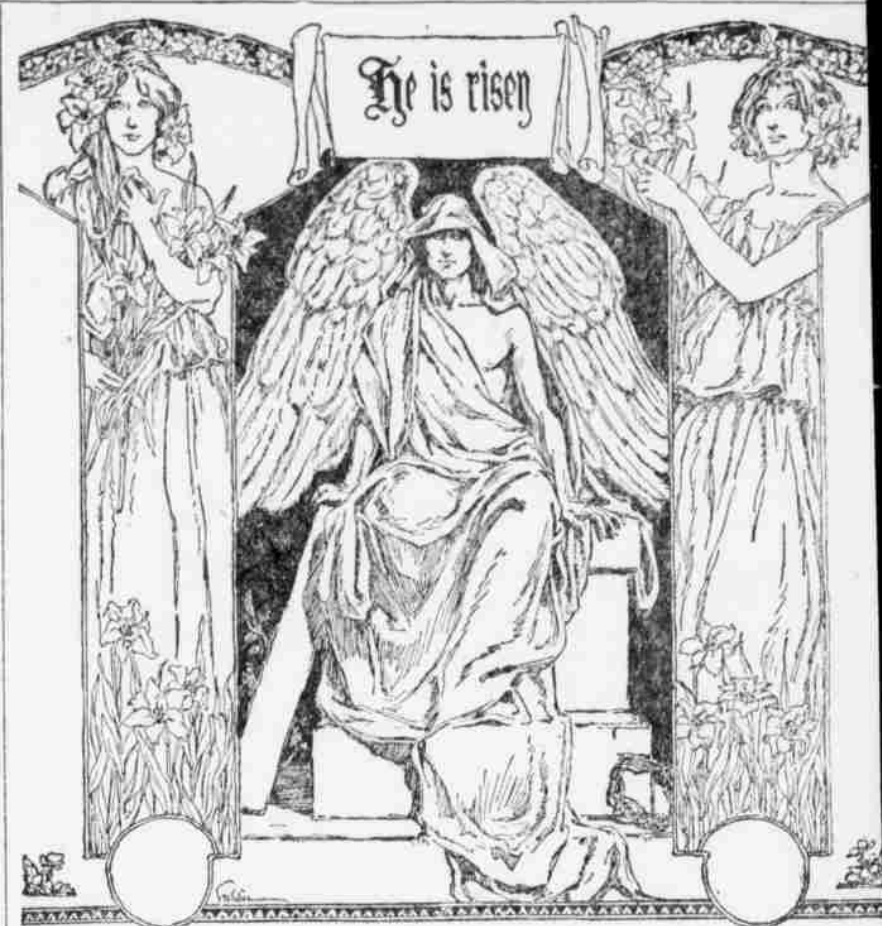
Without venturing into the vexed question whether the Harisil went from Japan to Bermuda, or vice versa, no one will contradict the statement that it is on British soil, the disintegrated coral of Bermuda, that it thrives best.

The Miracle of Spring



Photo by Frank Fournier.

O beautiful, beautiful lilies, what truths you typify!
You seemed to die in the autumn, and yet you did NOT die.
And on this Easter morning, while joyful voices sing,
You repeat to all the lesson of the miracle of spring.



"The day breaketh; the morning cometh; the shadows flee away."

LEWIS CARROLL'S EASTER GREETING

Sentiment by Author of "Alice," and Her Friends, the White Rabbit and the Beloved Cheshire Cat.

FORTY years ago Lewis Carroll wrote to his many little friends "An Easter Greeting to Every Child Who Loves Alice." The affectionate, earnest words—so characteristic of Rev. C. I. Dodgson and so unexpectedly serious from the author of the White Rabbit and the Mock Turtle—were printed on a tiny open sheet of paper, autograph, and inscribed with the Christian name of every child to whom it was sent on Easter eve. It read as follows:

Dear Child:
Please to fancy, if you can, that you are reading a real letter, from a real friend whom you have seen, and whose voice you can seem to yourself to hear wishing you, as I do now with all my heart, a happy Easter.

Do you know that delicious dreamy feeling when one first wakes on a summer morning, with the twitter of birds in the air and the fresh breeze coming in at the open window—when, lying lazily with eyes half shut, one sees as if in a dream green boughs waving or waters rippling in a golden light? It is a pleasure very near to sadness, bringing tears to one's eyes like a beautiful picture or poem. And is not that a mother's gentle hand that undraws your curtains and a mother's sweet voice that summons you to rise? To rise and forget, in the bright sunlight, the ugly dreams that frightened you so when all was dark—to rise and enjoy another happy day, first kneeling to thank that unseen friend who sends you the beautiful sun?

And these strange words from a writer of such tales as "Alice"? And is this a strange letter to find in a book of nonsense? It may be so. Some persons may blame me for this mixing together things grave and gay; others may smile and think it odd that anyone should speak of solemn things at all, except in church and on a Sunday; but I think—nay, I am sure—that some children will read this gently and lovingly and in the spirit in which I have written it.

For I do not believe God means us thus to divide life into two halves—to wear a grave face on Sunday and to think it out-of-place to even so much as mention him on a week day. Do you think he cares to see only kneeling figures and to hear only tones of prayer—and that he does not also love to see the lambs leaping in the sun, and to hear the merry voices of the children as they roll among the hay? Surely their innocent laughter is as sweet to his ears as the grandest anthem that ever rolled up from the "dim religious light" of some solemn cathedral!

And if I have written anything to add to these stories of innocent and

REASONABLE DOUBT



The Lady—I wonder if he loves me for myself alone or 'cause I got a whole slew of Easter eggs.

healthy amusement that are laid up in books for the children I love to look back upon without shame and sorrow (as how much of life must then be recalled!) when my turn comes to walk through the valley of shadows.

This Easter sun will rise on you dear child, "feeling your life in every limb," and eager to rush into the fresh morning air—and many an Easter day will come and go before it finds you feeble and gray-headed, creeping wearily out to bask more in the sun light—but it is good, even now, to think sometimes of that great morning, when the "Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in his wings."

Surely your gladness need not be less for the thought that you will on day see a brighter dawn than this—when lovelier sights will meet your eyes than any waving trees or rippling waters—when angel-hands shall undraw your curtains, and sweeter tones than ever loving mother breathed shall wake you to a new and glorious day, and when all the sadness, and the sl that darkened life on this little ear shall be forgotten like the dreams of a night that is past!

Your affectionate friend,
LEWIS CARROLL

Easter, 1876.

Once more the air is soft with spring;
Once more the fields are fresh with bloom;

Once more the birds about us sing
And Nature, bursting from her tor
Into another life new born
Wakes on this resurrection morn.

IN THE SOUTHERN COUNTRIES

Easter Celebrations Have Their Own Arrangements, Which Reflect the People's Ideas.

Throughout Cuba and Central America, the presence of soldiers dignifies the clumsy quaintness of the Easter celebrations. Crowds gather early in the plazas to watch the life-sized, waxen image of Jesus borne out of the cathedral on a high-draped platform. Acolytes, bearing censers, precede it, and behind it trail clouds of priests, bands, and flags. The procession moves slowly through a main thoroughfare until it meets a second figure, resplendent in blue paint, curls, and finery. There is a pause as the two figures confront each other. Then the second—Mary Magdalene—is turned laboriously about and gallops away with its joyful news. It encounters a third figure, painted yellow and decked with gold, as befits the Latin-American conception of the Virgin Mary. With the gilded figure leading, the two Marys trot back through the crowded streets to the first image. As the three meet, their draped platforms tip forward in solemn, silent bows, while thousands of awed believers watch in silence. Forming into line, the three images are borne back to the cathedral, the troops fire a salvo, and the Easter services begin.

Tokens of Spring.

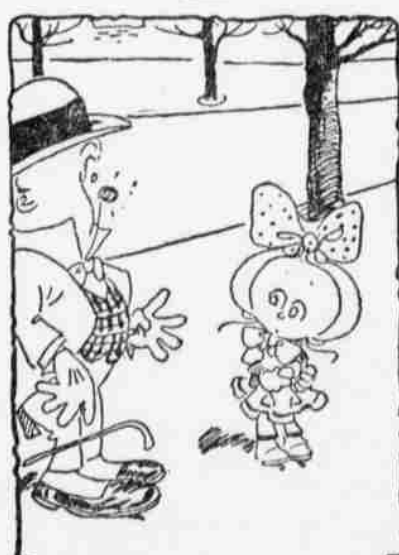
The husbandman—that is the man whose agricultural ability bands the households of the world together in one great family to be fed by him—stands before the tiny Spring Beauties, the Hepaticas, the Blood Roots, the Adder's Tongue and the other first-appearing lilies of the field, encouraged, heartened, inspired. If these delicate little visitors came up from the cold, dark soil, after winter's terrors had had their way with it, why so would his wheat and other grains, his potatoes and other roots, come up again with enhanced potentialities, if he should commit them to the earth!

EASTER THOUGHT

From Prejudice, Bitterness, Unkindness, Deliver Me.
Make Me Charitable in Thought
Slow to Condemn, and May
My Heart and Soul be Free of
the Poison of Malice, Intolerance,
Bigotry and Hate. AMEN.

—John T. McCutcheon in the Sunday Chicago Tribune.

A RED NOSE



"Say, Uncle Dick, papa says you use nose paint and I want to borrow some to color my Easter eggs."